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Guide to Bettws-Y-Coed and Llanrwst
with notices of Capel Curig, Trefriw,
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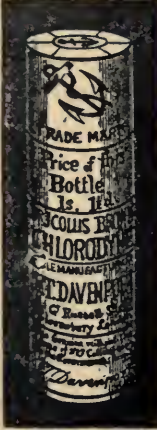
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BETTWS-Y-COED.

Isaac Slater

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BETTWS-Y-COED.

Bettws-y-coed is delightfully situated at the confluence of the rivers Conway and Llugwy, on the border of the counties of Denbigh and Carnarvon. It is 4 miles south from Llanrwst and 17 east of Carnarvon, and may be reached either by rail, *via* Conway, or by the Carnarvonshire or Denbighshire roads, the former being preferable, because nearer.

The grandeur and beauty of Bettws-y-Coed have for a long time been well known to artists, and no scenes in the British Islands have been oftener exhibited on the walls of the Royal Academy and in our leading Art galleries than the lovely river scenes of the Llugwy, Lledr and Conway. River, cataract, woodland and mountain are here commingled in such variety that the title of the "Paradise of Wales" may be fairly given to Bettws-y-Coed.

As a centre from which to make excursions into the neighbouring hills and dales, Bettws-y-Coed is perhaps the best halting place on the fringe of Snowdonia. It is distant from the Swallow Falls $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, Fairy Glen $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, Conway Falls 2 miles, Pandy Mills $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, Llyn Elsie $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, Llyn-y-Parc $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles, Capel Garmon 2 miles, Capel Carig 5 miles, Pont-y-Pant $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and Dolwyddelan 6 miles.

There is any number of delightful short walks, and in the season, brakes for the Miner's Bridge, Fairy Glen and Swallow Falls, start from the station as the trains arrive, and there is also an abundance of cars at the station. The charge for cars is 1s. per mile outwards and half fare return, and for the driver 3d. per mile outwards and half fare return. Coaches run daily in the season (except Sunday) to Llanberis (16 miles) and back, fare 5s., return 7s. 6d. (giving time for the ascent of Snowdon from Pen-y-Gwyrdd); to Beddgelert (18 miles) and back, fare 5s., return 7s. 6d.; to Portmadoc (25 miles), *via* Beddgelert and Pass of Aberglaslyn and return by Festiniog toy railway, fare 7s., return 10s. 8d; to Bangor (21 miles), through pass of Nant Francon and return

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by L. & N. W. Railway, fare 5s., return 7s. 6d.; to Capel Curig and back, fare 1s. 6d., return 2s. 6d., and to Fairy Glen, Conway Falls, Pandy Mill, etc., and back, fare 1s., return 2s.

The beauties of river, woodland, glen, or waterfall scenery abound whichever way you take a lowland walk, while the more hardy rambler will enjoy the bracing uplands and an occasional climb to the peaks and ridges further afield. Beautiful exceedingly is the Llugwy river at and above the singular old bridge, and lovely the walks either along the north side of the stream to or beyond the old Miner's Bridge (which, deemed unsafe, has lately been superseded by a more substantial structure), or on the other side, by the more prosaic Holyhead (and Capel Curig) road, from which, however, you can diverge into the cool shade of the woods. A mile or so further, and about two from the village, you reach the famous Swallow Falls—most beautiful, we think, when the stream is not in flood, and the water clear; peat washings sometimes make it quite brown.

An equally noted river scene is the Fairy Glen, a romantic ravine on the Conway, about two miles up the stream, just beyond the confluence with the Lledr river, and the cross-road, westward, to Dolwyddelan.

Frequent brakes run to the Glen, as well as to the *Swallow* but if it be fine, walk by all means.

There are two roads to the Fairy Glen; the main Holyhead Road past the Waterloo Hotel, across the Waterloo Bridge, (note inscription in the metal work of the arch) then turn to the right and take the lower road with the finger post directing to Dolwyddelan; proceeding half a mile, we come to the Beaver Bridge, where a turn-stile indicates the foot-road to the Glen.

By the other road, we leave the main Holyhead Road before crossing the railway bridge, keeping the railway on our left, and, after a slight ascent, continue through the woods for half a mile; passing under the line, we shortly arrive at a deep, calm, reach of the Conway, Llyn-yr-Afranc—the Beaver's Pool and Bridge. Some say the beaver was a water dragon, and the late Mr. Owen, of Pen-y-Gwryd, used to tell a quaint story of the creature's ill-doings until, by order of Merlin (or someone else), it was dragged across the country to Snowdon—twelve miles distant—by a team of white oxen, and consigned to the depths of Glaslyn.



Photo by

STILL POOL

Isaac Slater.

At the pool you cross the Beaver Bridge, and turn to the right along a narrow lane, which soon passes the entrance to the famous glen—a lovely combination of rapids, cascades, and rock-walls—feathered, and well-nigh *roofed* with foliage.

On leaving the Fairy Glen you can follow the lane yet further, to the main road near the milestone (which indicates 47 to Holyhead), and add the Conway Falls and Machno Falls to the ramble; as we gradually ascend, we notice the view behind us; the rocky face of the steepest side of Moel Siabod is seen above Glen Lledr, westward you see, afar off, the jagged crest of the Tryfan, at Llyn Ogwen, twelve miles away along Telford's road, on the right and left of which are seen part of the Carnedds and Glyder summits, Just before joining the main road, about half a mile from the Fairy Glen, are the Conway Falls; descending a somewhat steep path for a close inspection, the remains of an obtrusive salmon-ladder may be seen, which, having proved useless, has been allowed to fall in ruins. Returning, follow the Holyhead road about 200 yards, where it is joined by the road to Pen Machno on the right; following it about half-a-mile until some cottages are reached, turn again to the right and you will reach the Machno Falls and Roman Bridge—a scene truly beloved by artists, and like the Trefriw mill, often and often, but never too often sketched. A ramble through the Coed-y-Ffynon woods, just west of the Machno Bridge, leads to the hill top, 1,187 feet high, from it is a glorious view of Glen Lledr and Snowdonia, a truly magnificent evening scene.

Continuing the walk from the Roman Bridge, in about half-a-mile you will come to Pandy Mill and Falls, the surroundings of which have recently lost much of their picturesque character, through the building of an unsightly lodging-house, and the clearing away of several quaint old out-buildings; but the falls and mill still remain intact, and, seen from the garden, will doubtless be recognised by many as a well known subject in our picture exhibitions. You can now return to Bettws-y-Coed, if on foot, by continuing the road on the west side of the Conway, and opposite to the Fairy Glen. Passing through picturesque woods, descend after a mile to the old Lledr Bridge, where turning to the right a few yards will bring you to an old toll house and the Tyn-y-Cae Pool, where the junction of the Conway and the Lledr

occurs, and in the distance is seen the Beaver Bridge. A fine moor and ramble is the walk to Llyn Elsi, reached from near the church by a narrow way which climbs the east side of Garth Eryr, a hill dominating the village on the south. On the summit is a grand outlook, with Moel Siabod as the chief mountain feature, the lake just below to the south, and Tan-yr-allt, in Glen Lledr, a mile beyond—a course you may either take on the return, or follow the outward flow of the lake northward, reaching the Capel Curig road half a mile from Bettws. Before descending, however, note *well* the forms and positions of hills, vales, roads, and even cottages—information so gained, is pretty sure to come in useful in future rambles; *e.g.*, the climb to Llyn-y-Parc. Cross Pont-y-Pair and turn to the left, as though bound for the Miner's Bridge, but in half a mile turn to the right up a valley, down which comes the Llugwy's first tributary brook west of the old bridge. About three-quarters of a mile northward bear right to Pen'rallt, then north again round or over a cairn-topped hill, from which you see to the north-east a cottage near the outlet of the lake, the stream from which takes a precipitous short cut among woods (and, more's the pity, mine works) to the Llanrwst road, three-quarters of a mile north of Bettws. We have climbed both up and down the channel—an interesting, but, in wet weather, a risky scramble.

There is a track along the east side of Llyn-y-Parc to its northern end, from which it looks not unlike a well-wooded reach of some placid lowland stream—a semblance due to its being comparatively narrow and a little curved.

The uplands bordering the old Capel Curig road yield fine moorland and mountain scenery, and may be reached by either the north side of the Llugwy, going as though for the Miner's Bridge, but past it and bearing upwards towards the perched-aloft summer-house overlooking the Swallow Falls; or by following the Holyhead road to the Ty-hyll Bridge, just passing milestone 42, crossing it, and going straight forward up the old road itself. At a point where the road makes a turn to the right, a path runs straight on towards a cottage. If you take this path you come to the most picturesque view of the Swallow Falls, and perhaps the only spot where the whole fall, or succession of falls, is to be seen. The path crosses a stream and then turns down to the left,

you cross a stile, and, where the path forks, take the left branch, which brings you to another little bridge in view of the fall, and the scene here is truly lovely. The moors above are well besprinkled with lakes, tarns, lead mine works, and water wheels.

Among minor rambles, easily made out by the map, you may climb Garth-myn, south-east of Bettws, and visit Capel Garmon. The hill is 822 feet high, one of a group very fine in form and colour, and seen afar along the Conway valley. Follow the great road to, and over, Waterloo Bridge; then if streams be full, take the Llanrwst road (north) for a few hundred yards, and turn to the right up a track which doubles back a little as it climbs the slope. In dry weather you may cut off the corner by striking east up the hill near the bridge until, after crossing a sometimes furious torrent, you join the above track, which now turns eastward, and in half a mile brings you to the hill. Garth-myn, from its position, gives excellent views down Llanrwst vale, and up the Llugwy to the Snowdonian heights; though Snowdon itself is eclipsed by Moel Siabod. You can descend south to Capel Garmon, with its church and yew trees; and the antiquary may look up Careg Lleon, "the Stone of the Legion," and the two cromlechs near Ty'n-y-coed (one of them very perfect), from which point, a winding track leads south-west to the main road near Conway Falls, at milestone 47, whence the south-west turn leads to Penmachno, and onward by bleak uplands to Festiniog; the latter more easily reached by rail *via* Glyn Lledr and Dolwyddelan.

THE OLD CHURCH.

This church is one of the oldest in the principality, and is now used for interments only. It stands under the shade of ancient yews, near the railway station, and contains some interesting monuments, one in particular to the memory of Gruffydd, son of Dafydd Goch, and Grandson of Dafydd, last prince of Wales, brother to the Great Llewellyn. On the monument is a recumbent figure, and on one side the inscription—" *Hic jacet Gruffydd, of Dafydd Goch. Agnus dei miserere mei.*" Gruffydd died in the 14th century. About thirty yards from the church, down the lane towards the fields in the CHURCH POOL is a favourite spot for artists, and a few yards further are the stepping stones.

PONT-Y-PAIR.

On quitting the station, turn to the right into the Holyhead Road, opposite the Royal Hotel (the signboard of which, painted by David Cox, may still be seen there). About 100 yards further on to the right is the romantic bridge of Pont-y-Pair, designed by Inigo Jones, which spans a miniature cataract of the Llugwy, the foaming torrent as it rushes over the jagged rocks and under the arch of the bridge making with its island and fir trees a splendid picture for the amateur photographer. The view from the summits above Pont-y-Pair is very fine and extensive, embracing Moel Siabod; The Glyders, The Camedds, Tryfan, etc., and Bettws-y-Coed at your feet.

Over the road between Llanrwst and Bettws-y-Coed towards the magnificent Rock of the Falcon, in which was once the cave of the outlaw David ap Jenkin, *temp.* Edward IV. *Ogoff Shenkin* has attached to it, as most Welsh caves have, a legend. It records that, in the reign of Henry VII., a woodcutter named Jordan, whilst standing on Pont-y-pair, had a whisper from a power "uncanny" that in the cave of Jenkin there was that worth searching for. He mounted the rock in the early morning, whilst a heavy fog hung over the hill, but a bluish light issued from the cave, and directed his path. Entering the cave in a state of semi-intoxication and terror he heard a long drawn "ba-a-a," and saw two rolling globes of light, all of which proceeded from the sole occupant of the cave—a huge goat, which had one of its hoofs on a mighty chest, its eyes being fixed on a clasped book as if in deep meditation. The goat told Jordan that great wealth was in store for him on certain conditions, other goats were summoned, incantations gone through, and a heap of gold thrown into a crucible, and the chief goat said to Jordan, "I will make thee a man of gold—drink and be wealthy." Avarice overcame fear, and the woodcutter swallowed the draught. The next instant he was butted from the cavern by the head of the animal and found himself in the valley at the door of his own dwelling, and at the same moment the mouth of the cave closed up and has never been found since. The secret of the story is that Jordan's capital was never available, even to himself, and the rest of his natural life was rendered miserable by the fear that somebody would *steal him*, and the ruling passion being still strong



Photo by

MINER'S BRIDGE.

I. Slater, Llandudno.

at his death, he made a bargain with the priest that his body was to have decent Christian burial, the church being content with a *little finger* to defray expenses. Whether or not the church held to their bargain tradition does not say.

THE MINER'S BRIDGE.

A mile on the Holyhead Road from Bettws-y-coed, passing Pont-y-Pair on the right, is the gate leading to this old relic, which is well worth seeing, the views from the bridge on both sides being really charming. It is a sloping, wooden structure, and was originally placed there by the miners from Pentre Ddu (the village on the left), to cross on their way to the mines in the opposite hills, these mines formerly giving employment to about 500 hands. There is a way over the bridge and through the woods back to Bettws-y-Coed.

SWALLOW FALLS.

Another mile on the Holyhead Road brings us to the Rhaiadr-y-Wennol or Swallow Waterfall, which has now



Photo by

SWALLOW FALLS.

Isaac Slater.

become so famous as to be visited by 20,000 to 30,000 people annually. It is a scene where the visitor can linger a long time, for its surroundings are grand. After viewing the upper fall turn to the right and proceed cautiously down the steps to the lower fall, under the lowest depths of which the soul of Sir John Wynn, of Gwydyr, who died in 1626, is supposed to be undergoing punishment for the deeds done in his "days of nature."

THE CONWAY VALLEY.

Most of those who visit Nant Conway, the beautiful "Vale of Llanrwst," will have reached it *via* Llandudno junction; and in the hurry of sight-seeing against time, many will perversely stick to the rail whithersoever it may lead them, not always a wise course. The extension of the line from Llanrwst to Bettws-y-Coed injured for a while the former place; and its further continuation mountain-ward will doubtless cause many to rush past Bettws (so beautiful still in spite of recent vandalism), to find themselves caught in a tangle of branch-lines, "loop," and mineral traffic; shunted into a quarry, or, if somewhat careless, even spirited away from Taffyland altogether.

Visitors may either travel from Conway by boat (in the season) or by rail. There is one advantage in going by boat, and that is that the boat only makes the passage when the tide is up and the river is at its best. The *aber*, or mouth of the Conway, seems like a beautiful lake until we pass the turn of the river which shuts out Conway and its castle from our view.

To begin with the route by rail, as you turn southward from the junction look out on the right for a view unique as a railway picture. In sweeping round the Conway estuary, beautiful exceedingly at high tide, you see across the mile-wide sheet of water the Castle and town of Conway, a scene not much changed, except as regards the iron-road and its belongings, since the time when "Edward I., of memory accurst," (in the eyes of the Cymro) built, six hundred years ago, the grand fortress of Conway.

As we leave Llandudno junction and skirt the estuary, the dark woods of Benarth look fine on the opposite bank, and high up the hill is the hall, which must command a beautiful prospect. Moel Eilio comes in sight down the valley as we

proceed, the curiously shaped Penllithrig-y-Wrach ; we next see Carnedd Llewellyn, Foel Fras, and, nearer to us Tal-y-fan (2,000 feet), and arrive at the first station, *Glan Conway* (Llan-santffraid-Glan Conway) which is a mile and a half from the junction. Not far from this station are the lovely waterfalls of *Mant Geneth*, from which a splendid view of Conway is obtained. The next station is Tal-y-cafn ($5\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the junction), the starting place for several excursion routes, such as the Porthlywd Falls, Llyn Dulyn and the pass of Bwch-y-ddeufaen *en route* for Aber or Llanfairfechan.

At Tal-y-cafn station you have, about a mile to S.E., the pretty village of Eglwys-bach, and at twice that distance westward, Y Ro-wen ; both places, like others on the lower Conway, favourite haunts of artists.

A ferry used to cross the Conway here, but has been replaced by a very substantial iron bridge, crossing which you reach the pass of Bwlch-y-ddeufaen, the track of which you may recognise from a distance, by its cutting off Tal-y-fan from its bigger brethren to the south. This part of Carnarvonshire is full of antiquarian remains:—traces of Roman, Cambrian, and even of pre-historic times. To begin with the pass itself: it leads due west from Tal-y-cafn to the sea coast at Aber, a distance of nine miles, and was doubtless used in pre-Celtic times. About a mile from the ferry you cross the highway leading from Conway to Bettws-y-Coed (there is one on the Denbighshire side as well), and in a mile further come to Y Ro-wen. From this place the antiquary may appreciate a *detour* of a mile, northward, to the old church of Llangellyn, one of the most primitive in Wales ; or the climber find fit reward in the look-out from Craig-y-dinas north-east, or the loftier Tal-y-fan south-west, from the church ; in the latter case descending, if so disposed, by Y Foellwyd, the mountain's southern outwork, to the watershed of the Pass, at the "two stones" from which it takes its name. The erect stone—one has fallen—is about three yards in height, the road is here about 1,400 feet above sea level, and a more lonesome spot is hardly to be found even in Wales. Here Aber and the sea are distant about four miles. but at Pont-newydd, the oft-sketched bridge, about a mile east of the village, you may prefer to visit the Aber falls which are full in view at about half-an-hour's walk southward up the glen of Aber-fawr. After passing Tal-y-cafn you



Photo by

FAIRY GLEN.

Isaac Slater.

see, across the river,—first Y Ro-wen with its cottages, *white* as per the name; then Caerhun church just over the water. Caerhun church is built on the site of the ancient Roman station of *Conovium*. Many interesting relics have, from time to time been excavated here, some of them being in the British Museum. Foundations of a Roman villa have been laid open, and there are traces of a hypocaust. These ruins are a little behind the churchyard. In the churchyard is also an enormous holly, with a trunk nine feet in circumference. A Roman road is traced here from the ferry through the Bwlch-y-ddeufaen Pass, to Aber. After passing Caerhun church we see Llanbedr, the entrance of the Dulyn glen, and at eight miles from Conway, glittering aloft among hanging woods the Porthlwyd falls, on the stream which comes from Llyn Eigiau; to which the robust scrambler will find it a pleasant ramble of four miles up the vale: and *from* which he may extend his walk (two or three miles further) to Llyn Dulyn and the Carnedd.

At the ninth mile (by rail) you see, in like position, the falls of Dolgarrog on the outlet stream from Llyn Cowlyd, which is about three miles further back to the south-west. These comparatively foreground objects form a running panorama of great beauty, backed by the noble heights already described. A little further on is seen what looks like a large streak of yellow ochre descending the face of the rock. It is this yellow bed which conveys the healing stream of Trefriw to the house below. Trefriw wells being about a mile and a quarter from the village. A few minutes more and we are at Llanwrik and Trefriw station, a short run from thence through Llanrwst, bringing us to Bettws-y-Coed.

THE FAIRY GLEN.

This glen, as its name suggests, is a truly enchanting spot. From the railway station to reach the glen, we turn into the Holyhead road to the left, passing the Waterloo Hotel, and over the Waterloo Bridge, which spans the river Conway. After crossing the bridge we descend to the right, the beautifully wooded hills and pine-clad precipices on every side presenting a grand picture. On arriving at the Fairy Glen House, close to the Beaver's Pool Bridge, a lane is entered on the left, and after proceeding a short distance the rocky dell is seen below us. Descending by some steps to

the bed of the river we gain a secluded spot amongst huge masses of rock, where the whole scene seems to be one of enchantment. The waters of the Conway rush along the narrow gorge in a continuous torrent, the vertical rocks on either side being clothed with vegetation of the richest kind, the stream winding round the picturesque cliffs, after passing the gorge, on its way to its junction with the Llugwy. After re-ascending, a few minutes' stroll along the path, which leads to the Conway Falls, will repay the visitor. In returning to Bettws-y-Coed you can cross the Beaver's Pool Bridge and enter a road on the right which leads through the wood, and emerges a few yards from the Waterloo Hotel.

CAPEL CURIG.

Proceed from Bettws-y-Coed along the Holyhead Road past the Miner's Bridge and Swallow Falls until you reach Ty-hyll Bridge, by which you cross the Llugwy. Close to the bridge there is a way to Llanrwst across the mountains. From the bridge, the summit of Carnedd Llewellyn is a conspicuous object, with Carnedd Daffydd to the left of it. Passing a number of hotels and lodging-houses, Moel Siabod looks very fine above the fir trees on our left, and it is not long ere we reach the corner where, in the old coaching days, the horses were changed. At this corner Snowdonia stands before us a splendid picture—Crib Coch, Crib-y-ddysgl, Y Wyddfa, and Lliwedd, all visible—as they are seen from the garden of the big hotel. During the season there are coaches daily performing this little journey from Bettws-y-Coed and back, which allows tourists to pass some hours at Capel Curig. The more hardy climber (for Capel Curig is a place for climbing) may ascend Moel Siabod by, not crossing the bridge, but mounting the track leading to the slate quarry, high up on the south-west, going past it to Llyn-y-foel, and, if not plagued with "nerves," reaching the mountain crest by a scramble up the northern one of two gulleys which descend the precipice towards the tarn, and are so narrow as to be out of sight until you are right opposite. (The southern groove may be practicable—we have not tried it.) For a much easier ascent, turn to the right (west) when half way to the quarry, and afterwards southward; first flanking, then turning the mountain's north-east end. The rampart of broken rock which faces north is,

by the way, not so inaccessible as it looks; but on crossing, or getting round it, you find the summit a good half-mile to south-west. The intervening crest, though rough and block-strewn, is easy walking, and the downlook to Llyn-y-foel very grand. You may descend due north to Bryn Engyn, a white house at the upper edge of the steep woodland south of Capel Curig and thence to the bridge at the outlet of the lakes, close to the Royal Hotel. The reverse of this descent is the most convenient and shortest way up, being, in fact, "Siabod made easy." The mountain being, like Arenig Fawr and the *Carnarvon* Moel Eilio (there is a lesser one north of Llyn Cowlyd), an outlier, commands a magnificent look out.

Behind the post office, at the old Llugwy bridge, is an outlying bit of Fairy-glen-like river scenery, the last of the kind Snowdon-ward; and from this point you may make a long up-and-down westward ascent of the Glyders, keeping a sharp look-out for bogs, and having glorious mountain scenery all the way; first climbing Cefn-y-capel, then on past Gallt-y-go-go and another peak. Glyder Fach, or Lesser Glyder—the nearer of the two, and for its crag and *block* scenery, the wonder of Snowdonia. [See Kingsley's "Two Years ago."]

From the Lesser Glyder you may, in half an hour, reach Glyder Fawr, or descend north, *with care*, by the head of Cwm Tryfan to Cwm Bochlwyd (a grand, yet rarely visited spot), and thence go up the Tryfan, 3,000 feet high, an ascent much easier than it looks, and well worth the extra trouble. The outflow from Llyn Bochlwyd will guide you to the Bangor road at Llyn Ogwen.

This point you may reach by coach or car, or vary it, if on foot, by crossing the post office bridge and following the *old* road, the distance being nearly five miles. Here you may turn south by the Hone Mill to Llyn Idwal, and on to Twll Du, or the Devil's Kitchen, three-quarters of a mile (and nearly three-quarters of an *hour*) beyond, and from thence, not *through* the chasm, turn its eastward rock-portal and climb up to Llyn-y-cwn, and the heights described in our "Guide to Carnarvon and Llanberis."

A little beyond milestone 39 you may turn to right up a cart road, past a farm, and on north to Llyn Cowlyd; or leave the track for a climb up Pen-llithrig-y-wrach, and on thence along the sky-line to Pen-helyg, from which is an easy

descent by its long southern arm to the road. A fair climber may continue the walk from Pen-helyg along a very sharp ridge, with Ffynon Llugwy, source of the river, in a fine hollow on the left, and Cwm Eigiau, with its "Frog Pool" (Ffynon Llyffaint), on the right, to Bwlch-cyfrwy-drym (the back wall of Cwm Pen-llafar), where a turn to north will land him on Carnedd Llewelyn; and south to west above the Black Ladders (the south wall of the *Cwm*) on Carnedd Cafydd, the next peaks in height after Snowdon, being respectively 3,482 and 3,430 feet above sea level. (For the views see our "Guide to Bangor and Beaumaris.") From Carnedd Dafydd you can descend south to Ffynon Lloer, and follow its outfall, still south, to Llyn Ogwen and the main road; or go down from Cyfrwy-drym, south-east, past Craig Llugwy and Glan Llugwy farm to the road at a point nearer Capel Curig.

DOLWYDDELAN.

Dolwyddelan, distance about five and a half miles from Bettws-y-Coed by road, or six miles by rail, is a large village in the Lledr Valley, and is well worth the walk along Glyn Lledr, and by Pont-y-Pant. The *old* church is a curious piece of antiquity, the oak screen being almost unique. In the church, which was built by Meredydd-ap-Ifan, is a monument to his family, and a Latin inscription, on brass; "Pray for the souls of Meredydd-ap-Ifan ap Robert, Knight, and Alice, his wife, who died 17th March, 1525, for whose souls God be propitiated. Amen." The scanty ruins of the Castle are about a mile from the village, towards Festiniog, and near the railway. It is supposed to have been built in the eighth century. Close to the Castle is a curious cottage called Hafad-y-Gwragedd (the Women's Habitation), where the women dwelt when the men were in the Castle. This castle was the birthplace of Llewelyn the Great.

There is now a new church at Dolwyddellen, but the curious little building founded by Meredydd should really be visited

An old farm house at the end of the parish, called *Coetmor*, was once the residence of that famous warrior, Howel-y-Fwyell (Howell of the Battle Axe), who fought at the battle of Poitiers, and, tradition says, took prisoner the French king, though that honour is given by historians to Denis de Morbecque, a knight of Artois.



Photo by

WATERLOO BRIDGE.

Isaac Slater.

LLANRWST.

Llanrwst station, four miles north of Bettws-y-Coed, is a good half-mile north of the town, which is on the Denbighshire side of the Conway, and owing to cuttings and a tunnel, is hardly seen from the line. The town itself is not very remarkable, except for its old church, dedicated to St. Grwst, or Rhystyd, with the Gwydir chapel designed by Inigo Jones and erected in 1633, the monuments of the Wynn family, in the form of brasses and marbles, which are beautiful and curious, and other monuments on the floor, which have been removed here for protection and preservation, including the stone coffin of Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, Prince of Wales from 1194 to 1240. The coffin is ornamented with quatrefoils. The beautifully carved rood-loft and screen, said to have been brought from Maenan Abbey, is one of the most notable features of the church. Suspended against the wall of the chapel are a pair of antique spurs which belonged to Davydd-ap-Jenkin, the "Rob Roy" of Wales.

The ground on which the church is built is, like many other similar places in Wales, connected with a tale of blood, being given, according to tradition, by Rhun-ap-Nefydd-Hardd, in expiation of the murder of Idwal, the son of Owen Gwynedd, by Nefydd, his foster-father, who had been entrusted with his care.

At the gate of the churchyard there are some almshouses of a very depressing character, to judge by their looks, which, to believe the native testimony, were once inhabited by a set of lively and loquacious old ladies. The last of the Llanrwst harp-makers (and harp making was once on a time the most notable business of the town) is said to have ended his days in these buildings, but would never finish an instrument at home lest the noise the said old ladies made should affect the harp and spoil its tone.

The old bridge over the Conway is rather a steep and inconvenient structure, built, it is said, by Richard Wynn, from designs by Inigo Jones (who was a native of this part of the country) in 1636. Others suppose that it was raised at the expense of the county. It is built upon such nice principles, that when a person bumps his back suddenly against the large stone which is placed over the centre arch, the whole fabric will sensibly vibrate or shake. There is commonly a man on [the] bridge who, *for a consideration*, will

do the back-bumping for the edification of visitors, but the said visitors are generally disposed to take the shaking for granted without the experiment.

GWYDIR CASTLE.

Cross the old bridge, and in half a mile you reach the Conway and Bettws highway, close to Gwydir Castle, a modern house on the site of a very old one, the entrance to which is a few yards to the left. Near this point the *old* Capel Curig road starts for a $3\frac{1}{2}$ mile course over hill and moor until it joins Telford's great road. At first it passes through dense woodland, and, when it emerges among the hills, yields grand mountain views. At half a mile you pass the gamekeeper's house, where two other courses are open; turning to the left you have the most lovely walks among the woods, winding and intermixing in various ways; here too is the site—high up—of an older Gwydir, and there yet remains the old chapel, still used for service. At various points you may descend into the Bettws road again.

Gwydir, which is quite a show place during the season, stands at the foot of a lofty rock called *Carveg-y-Gwalch*, and is surrounded by most magnificent woods. It derives its name from *Gwaed-dir* (*the bloody land*), an allusion to a battle fought here about A.D. 610, by Llywarch Hen. Most of the present building was erected in the early part of the present century, although there still remain traces of the Elizabethan period. Some of the rooms contain carved work of that period, and the time of James I., and there is a screen which is said to have been worked by the hand of Mary Queen of Scots. The castle abounds in curiosities, and some parts of the Spanish leather wall-covering and tapestry will well repay examination. There are a few portraits in the place, by Lely and other artists. The property, which was long the patrimony of the Wynns, came into the possession of Lord Willoughby D'Eresby, by marriage.* Recently, Lord Willoughby D'Eresby now Lord Ancaster, sold the Trefriw portion of the Gwydr estate; the

* Sir John Wynn, of Gwydir, was a celebrity in his time. He was M.P. for Carnarvonshire in 1576, one of the Council for the Marches of Wales, and created a baronet in 1611. "Being very shrewd and successful in his dealings," people supposed that he oppressed them, and Yorke says—"It is the superstition of the place to this day that the spirit of the old gentleman lies under the great waterfall, Rhaiadr-y-Wennol (better known as the Swallow Fall), there to be punished, purged, spouted upon, and purified from the foul deeds done in his days of nature."

castle and a portion of the estate surrounding it are now in the possession of the Earl of Carrington. Near the castle is a beautiful cataract, called *Rhaiadr-y-Parc Mawr*, the fall of which is about a hundred feet.

As we leave Gwydir, we find, on the opposite side of the road, the approach to *Gwydir Ucha*, where there is an Episcopal chapel, once a summer residence of the Gwydir family. We reach the little building (where service is yet performed in summer time on a Sunday afternoon) by a flight of steps. The chapel is curiously arranged and the seats are old oak chairs. Over the door is inscribed "1673, S. R. W. B." Near the entrance to Gwydir is also an old bowling green. There are walks in many directions in the Gwydir Woods. Beyond the keeper's house you may take a turn to the left (south) up Nant Gwydir, with a brook and some lead mines below on the right, until you reach the head of *Llyn-y-Parc*, to the right (west) of which the upland of *Mwdwl Eithin* affords one of the finest outlooks in the country. North you have the whole vale right away to the Ormes Heads and the sea; and east, south, and on to north-west, the grandest of mountain panoramas, including all the giants of Snowdonia except *Moel Hebog*, which is eclipsed by *Siabod*. The fine form of the latter as thus seen (much foreshortened) is very striking.

At the keeper's house again, you may turn north and skirt the woodland till you descend into the highway towards *Trefriw*; or by keeping up hill reach after some twists and turns the church of *Llanrhychwyn*, unique in its rude antiquity, and subject of two pictures by Clarence Whaite. West of this primitive village, *Llyn Geirionydd* and *Llyn Crafnant*, well worth a visit, are easily reached; and from the latter a pleasant upland walk of three miles will take you to *Capel Curig*.

Five miles south-east of *Llanrwst* is *Gregthorn*, the site of an ancient nunnery where *St. Winifred* was buried.

Llanrwst itself forms a centre for many most lovely walks of the less muscle-and-nerve-trying kind, among woodland, cliff, and water scenery of the highest type, their beauty enhanced by the distant line of rugged moor and mountain, and is moreover a favourite resort of artist and angler.



Photo by

THE CONWAY AT TREFRIW.

Isaac Slater

TREFRIW.

From the Gwydir road junction Trefriw, once celebrated for the manufacture of Welsh harps, is distant a mile and a half down the Conway road; but a short distance may, unless the flooded Conway bar the way, be saved by turning to the right across the fields just over Llanrwst bridge. Trefriw is about $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Conway, and five miles south of the cross road (before described) leading to Y-Ro-wen. Its chief attractions are the mountain and woodland walks in well nigh every direction, the angling, the two fine waterfalls—Dolgarrog and Porthlwyd, and the wholesome (but very *nasty*) mineral spring near the eighth milestone from Conway, which runs, or seems to run, down the bare hillside like a streak of yellow ochre. It is a great resort of artists, and has been the creator of many pictures which have graced the walls of the Royal Academy. Taliesin, the father of Welsh poetry, is said to have resided in the neighbourhood.

Trefriw was a residence of Llewelyn, who is said to have built the old Llanrhychwyn (or Llewelyn's) church for the convenience of his wife, who wished to avoid the fatigue of attending service at Llanrhychwyn. The building is one of the rudest and most primitive places of worship in the principality, and is dedicated to St. Rhychwyn, who lived, it



Photo by

FAIRY FALLS, TREFRIW.

I. Slater, Llandudno.

is said, in the sixth century. The building is a low edifice about forty feet long inside. Its antiquity is apparent; the architecture carries us back to pre-Anglo-Norman times. The roof timbers, the old oaken door, hinged on wooden pivots, and some of the windows are very curious, and will repay the time taken in inspecting them. Over the lych gate, which it is interesting to note, opens into the field and not into the road, is the inscription: "IT. ID. OT. 1462. wo." The key of the church is kept in a cottage close by.

The walk to the lakes Geirionydd and Crafnant, going or returning by way of Llanrhychwyn church, is perhaps

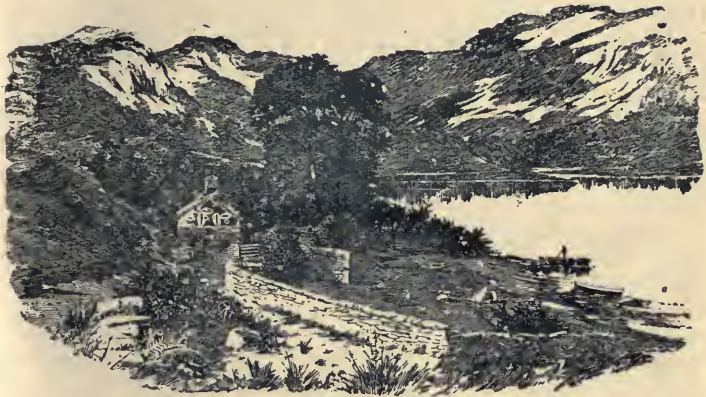


Photo by

LLYN CRAFTANT.

Isaac Slater.

easier to make out than the route from the Gwydir woods. The lakes are but two miles away up the glen, which forks like a Y to reach them. The right branch leads to Crafnant and the left to Geirionydd, the tarns being separated by but a half-mile of ridge, Mynydd Deulyn.

LLYN CRAFTANT is as fine in its weird, steel-blue beauty as anything that can be seen in the most popular of show places in the United Kingdom, and it has also the great advantage of solitude, for there are no habitations within a mile of the lonely little cottage where they give you milk to drink at the end of the walk. When the Gwydr was sold, a short time ago, the late Mr. James, solicitor, Llanrwst, purchased the

lake, afterwards presenting it in perpetuity to the town of Llanrwst for their water supply.

LLYN GEIRIONYDD has been rendered almost classical by being the reputed scene of the home of the Welsh bard, Taliesin, who is said to have been found on its shore like Moses in the bulrushes. A monument erected by Lady Willoughby D'Eresby marks his supposed residence.

Llanrhychwyn is a mile south of Trefriw, along a road parallel with the Bettws highway, but rising up the flanks of the wooded hillside. The stream from the two lakes turns the ever-sketched (and never too often) Trefriw mill.

The Dolgarrog Falls are $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles along the Conway road; those of Porthlwyd a mile beyond. The source of the former is Llyn Cowlyd, three miles away among the hills; and of the latter Llyn Eigiau at about the same distance. The lover of moor and mountain should visit both.



Photo by

PONT ABERGLASLYN,
(From Abel Heywood & Son's Guide to Snowdon and Beddgelert.

J. Hudson.



Photo by

CARNARVON CASTLE.
(From Abel Heywood & Son's Guide to Carnarvon.)

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Group "B."

ROUTE I.—LLANGOLLEN TO BANGOR.

The letters R and L in capitals signify right or left turn, as the case may be.

LLANGOLLEN	Uphill to Berwyn Station. From Llangollen to Corwen, a
Berwyn Sta. 1½	third of the distance is uphill, rest is easy running and good
Corwen 10½	road with glorious scenery. Straight through Corwen town,
Cerrig-y-Druidion	then R over Railway Bridge along Telford's Road. Stiff ride
20½	from Corwen to Cerrig-y-Druidion with several good runs
	down. Surface good.
CERRIG-Y-	Straight along, easy undulations with good surface to Pentre
DRUIDION	Voelas. Then easy run, mostly downhill with one difficult descent
Pentre Voelas 5½	a mile short of Bettws. Excellent surface. Keep straight through
Bettws-y-Coed	Bettws. Conway Falls, situated amidst fine surroundings, and
12½	Fairy Glen, a delightful combination of rocks, greenery, and rush-
Capel Curig 17½	ing torrent, are both on L before reaching Bettws. Road now on
Lake Ogwen 22½	rise as far as the Swallow Falls (free, and by many considered
Pass of Ffrancon	the finest in Wales). Then fairly level with short steep ascent
23½	to Capel Curig. Surface good. At Capel turn R, and then
Bethesda 27½	straight road, rising and very rough and stony for 3½ miles, to
BANGOR 32½	elevation of 1,050 feet above sea level. Then undulating for
	1¼ miles with gentle fall at Lake Ogwen. Between Capel
	Curig and Lake Ogwen the scenery is wild and bleak. Magni-
	ficent views are obtained of the famous Glyder heights. Lake
	Ogwen itself lies in the hollow between the mountains. All
	down hill now to Bethesda; steep hill requiring care, with
	sharp bend just before reaching the town. Good road.
	Penrhyn Slate Quarries are passed on the L before reaching
	Bethesda. At Bethesda follow main road over the bridge.

ROUTE II.—BANGOR TO CARNARVON.

BANGOR	Through High Street, and bear R just before station into
Upper Bangor I	Holyhead Road; turn L at fork. Long rise from Bangor to
CARNARVON IO	Upper Bangor, but rideable; afterwards easy going mostly
	descending with good surface, and glimpses of the Menai
	Straits.

ROUTE III.—CARNARVON TO BEDDGELERT (direct).

CARNARVON	Leave by Tithewarn Street, sharply undulating to Waenfawr,
Cacathraw 1½	¾ mile before which keep to L; then easier undulations to
Waenfawr 4	Llyn Cwellyn, soon after which begins a steady ascent to nearly
Bettws Garmon 6	700 feet, then follows a 3 mile winding easy descent to
Llyn Cwellyn 7	Beddgelert. Surface good.
BEDDGELERT 12½	

ROUTE IV.—CARNARVON TO BEDDGELERT (by Llanberis).

CARNARVON	Leave by Pool Street and turn L into Llanberis Road. To
Llanrug 3½	Llanberis the road is on the whole bad. First 2 miles
Penybont 5½	ascending, then undulating, ending in a sharp difficult descent
Llanberis 7½	into Llanberis. At Llanrug, keep straight forward, and at
(Pass of Llanberis)	Penybont bear R. Fine views of Snowdon as Llanberis is
Gorwysfa 13	nearly reached. From Llanberis an ascent of 3 miles through the pass
Pen-y-Gwrhyd	commences. Surface rough, scenery wild. Gorwysfa is the
Hotel 14	actual summit, and thence it is nearly all down hill to
BEDDGELERT 21½	Beddgelert. Surface exceedingly stony and rough. At Pen-
	y-Gwrhyd, turn to R. Some very fine views of Snowdon and
	Lakes Gwynant and Dinas are obtained during this run. The
	"easy" ascent of Snowdon from Llanberis can be well com-
	bined with this route.

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Group B will be found in each of our guides to Conway and Penmaenmawr, Bangor and Beaumaris, Carnarvon and Llanberis, Snowdon and Beddgelert, Criccieth and Pwllheli, Llanrwst and Bettws-y-Coed, and consists of Llangollen to Bangor, Bangor to Carnarvon, Carnarvon to Beddgelert (2 routes); Beddgelert to Maentwrog; Maentwrog to Barmouth, Bettws-y-Coed to Beddgelert, Conway and Llandudno, and Llandudno to Bangor.

Group C will be found in each of our guides to Harlech and Barmouth, Dolgelly, Bala, and Aberystwyth, and consists of Barmouth to Maentwrog, Aberdovey and Dolgelly, Dolgelly to Aberdovey and Bala; Aberdovey to Dolgelly by Machynlleth; Bala to Dolgelly; Dolgelly to Aberystwyth; and Aberystwyth to Newtown.

Group D will be found in each of our guides to Chester, Llangollen, and Corwen, and consists of Chester to Llangollen, Llangollen to Cerrig-y-Druidion, Cerrig to Bangor by Bettws-y-Coed; Shrewsbury to Llangollen; Newtown to Llangollen; Llangollen to Bala.

It may be noticed that the routes are planned in such a way as to dovetail into one another, and so several complete circuits can be made.

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Oswestry, 1903.

C. S. DENNISS, Secretary and General Manager.

A Few Practical Hints to Tourists.

By the Editor of Abel Heywood's Guide Books.

In travelling along the roads, the maps which accompany the 2d. edition of this series of Guide Books will be found to be amply sufficient, but if the Tourist leaves the beaten tracks and takes to the pathless mountains, he should by all means provide himself with a 1-inch Ordnance Map, by the careful observance of which, and by the compass, he may tread his way anywhere. To prevent confusion among the hills, it is best for the tourist always to observe the streams carefully, rather than the mountains, and find the mountains by the streams, rather than the streams by the mountains. If he should at any time be completely lost (and sudden mist is the only excuse for anyone losing himself who has map and compass) it will be best for him to take Sir Walter Scott's advice, and follow a stream down, walking by or *in* it, and he will certainly, by and by, arrive at a human habitation, and that by the least dangerous route he could select. The number of precipices down which most streams tumble is few, and the noise of falling water will give timely warning of them.

It is very important that the Tourist should remember that the compass does not point true North; there are considerable variations in different parts, even of Britain, but generally, at the present time, the difference may be said to be 20 degrees West; in order then to ascertain true North, the needle of the compass should be over the letters N.N.W., and the letter N. on the table of the compass will then point North. If the map be placed in this way, with its North to the true North, the Tourist may see correctly the direction he ought to take.

It is well to remember that the sun at 12 o'clock each day is in the South, or very near it, and therefore, if a stick be stuck straight up in the ground at that time, the shadow points exactly North. A watch may be used as a compass by pointing the hour-hand towards the sun. Due South will then be midway between the hour-hand and twelve o'clock.

No Tourist should ever venture on a walking excursion without a good waterproof coat, sound boots, and a stout walking stick, and if he takes a small parcel of provisions he will find more advantage from them than from drink. Of the latter he may get the best and most plentiful supply at the rivulets.

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CHEAP WEEK-END AND TEN DAYS' TICKETS

are issued on Fridays and Saturdays (July 31st and August 1st excepted), from many of the Provincial Stations on the L. & N.-W. Railway to North Wales, the Cambrian Line, Blackpool, Morecambe, Windermere, Great Eastern Co.'s East Coast Stations, and the N.E. Co.'s Yorkshire Coast Stations. Full particulars can be obtained at the Stations. **WEEK-END TICKETS** are also issued from London.

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London, Euston Station, 1903.

FREDERICK HARRISON, General Manager.

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